

xmstantine's Death and Character 3²⁵

ntinued without intermission in their world-nowned temples.

No doubt in districts where the Christians were a marked majority and paganism found only kewarm adherents, there was occasional violence ewn to the old temples and statues, especially the governor happened to be a Christian. Orna-ents might be stolen, treasures ransacked, and prob->ly few questions were asked. Christianity had :en persecuted so long and so savagely that when e day of revenge came, the temptation was too rong for human frailty to resist, and as long as there is no serious civil disturbance the authorities prob->ly made light of the occurrence. Paganism was a nng creed; where it had to struggle hard to keep ; head above water, the end was not long delayed, he case would be different where the temples were >ssessed of great wealth and where there were >werful priestly corporations to defend their jsted interests. There can be no greater mistake .an to suppose that Constantine declared war on .e old religion. He did nothing of the kind. Htien he showered favours on the Christian clergy, hat he did in effect was merely to raise them to .e same status as that already enjoyed by the igan priesthood. He did not take away the privi-ges of the colleges : and inscriptions have been und which tend to shew that he allowed new col-ges to be founded which bore his name. In short, • the old State-established and State-endowed re-jion he added another, that of Christianity, reserv-g his special favour for the new but not actively